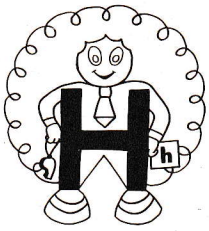
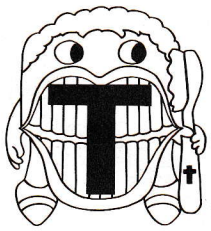


Parent Guide to The Letter People™ Learning Advantage Plus



— The Adventure continues! —

Welcome! You have chosen a unique and proven reading concept which has helped millions of children enjoy learning to read. Welcome to the world of The Letter People™ — where learning is play and play is learning! By selecting The Letter People™, you are helping your child along the way to a lifetime of reading and learning.

This is the second program of The Letter People™ series. ("Advantage Plus" picks up where "Learning Advantage" leaves off — at Episode 16.) To get the maximum benefits of "Advantage Plus", your child should have already mastered reading words that include short vowel sounds and consonant blends such as "drop", "jump", "stand".

- The Letter People™ is a specially adapted home version of the program that has been successfully used by over 30,000 classroom teachers nationwide. *Over 12 million schoolchildren* have learned to read with The Letter People™. These videos were developed in cooperation with Educational Television and unlike other phonetic reading programs, The Letter People™ videos were created *exclusively for children.*
- The Letter People™ program is more than just a phonetic reading course. It truly celebrates the joy of language and the wonder of reading by teaching children to not only read, but learn helpful things *through* reading.

Why is it so successful?

The Letter People™ program lets your child learn at his or her own pace. **There is no "correct" speed or time required to master The Letter People™ tapes and books.**

Children instinctively know something adults often forget — that learning can be fun. It is a natural process. That's why The Letter People™ has been so successful — it accents the fun — and learning to read just comes naturally!

- **How did you teach your child to *walk?*** You simply helped your child teach him or herself, progressing at a comfortable and natural pace. Every time he or she made an effort, you provided encouragement. Every little bit of progress was cheered, until, one day, your child actually walked.
- **How did you teach your child to *talk?*** You taught by your example. Your child learned, largely, by observing you and repeating what you said. Learning to speak came naturally.
- ***Now* you can help your child learn to *read* in very much the same way with The Letter People™.** Let your child learn at his or her own pace. Provide guidance and encouragement and your child will reward *you* by reading.

The Letter People™ "Advantage Plus" kit includes:

1. **5 videotapes**
   Episodes 16-40
2. **5 Corresponding Reading/Writing/Spelling Books**
3. **A full-color "We Are The Letter People™" T-Shirt**
4. **A sheet of full-color Letter People stickers**
5. **Parent Guide**

How to begin:

Begin with the Review Episode "16" on videotape 6 and be sure to watch with your child. He or she should be able to read about 80% of the words from the corresponding "words for reading & spelling" page in your Reading/Writing/Spelling Book. (It is not necessary to be able to spell 80% of the words).

The Review Episode features "Nardo The Detective" who will guide your child through The Letter People™ "Hall of Fame". These visits to The Hall are to review important basic skills taught in the first Letter People Learning Advantage Videos program — short vowel sounds, consonants, etc. It is important that your child be comfortable with these skills before proceeding with the "Advantage Plus" program.

If your child can not read the words, you can keep Advantage Plus for later use and order the original Letter People Learning Advantage Videos program. Contact us at: 1-800-935-LETTER.

Our educators suggest you follow this procedure with your Reading/Writing/ Spelling Books.

1. Watch *all* episodes (16-40) at least once, completing the corresponding "words for reading & spelling" section for each episode as you go.
2. Begin again with Episode 16, reviewing your already completed "words for reading & spelling" and then complete the "sentences for reading & writing" section.

Sentence structure is not taught until the last 2 episodes, therefore sentence exercises should NOT be attempted until the "word" exercises are completed for all episodes (16-40).

Tips for success:

1. **Establish a comfortable pace.** Let your child proceed at his or her own pace and enjoy the program. Remember *learning is fun!* (Regardless of episode number, we do suggest your child watch The Letter People™ at least 3 - 4 times per week. Children are more successful with frequent and shorter viewings, than with fewer and longer viewings.)

2. **Encourage *all* efforts.** Praise all efforts and progress. (Even mistakes are opportunities for learning.)

3. **Participate with your child whenever possible.** The Review Episode 16 *requires* you to determine if your child can read about 80% of the words in the corresponding book. While parental guidance is encouraged throughout all episodes, this program is designed for your child to work independently.

4. **Multiple lessons in episodes should be approached *one at a time.*** Many episodes contain lessons for more than one sound. For these episodes your child should complete *only one sound per session* . . . do not try to attempt too many at one sitting. Have your child complete the word or sentence pages for one sound at a time .

5. **Encourage your child to speak the words out loud as they are learning them.** This is helpful during the writing exercises. The repetition reinforces the learning process. "See the word. – Say the word. – Write the word."

6. **Repeat viewings are good.** Children enjoy and continue to learn from repeated viewings of the videos. We suggest watching an episode more than once before beginning the corresponding Reading/Writing/Spelling Book.

7. **"Runaway" or "sight" words.** Beginning with Episode 20, "runaway" or "sight" words are introduced. These are words such as to, the that cannot be sounded out and must be memorized. Make memorizing runaway words fun. Have your child write each of these words, on separate 3 x 5 file cards. These cards can be used as flash cards for review. File them alphabetically, or by sound (such as all "ar" sound words — "star", "car", "dart"). Words learned outside of The Letter People™ program can be added to the collection too — the sky's the limit!

   Your child may want to store these cards in a special "treasure box". Cards can be gradually added, then taken out and reviewed. Any small box will do — a file box, a shoe box, etc. Your child may want to decorate the box. The Letter People™ stickers are excellent for this use. The spirit of The Letter People™ is that learning to read is FUN!

8. **Set a good example.** Take time to read to your children. There's a world of wonderful children's literature as close as your public library or bookstore. Let your child see you enjoying your own reading too. Your example will teach that reading is fun and is something your child can enjoy all his or her life...just like you.

The Letter People™ – *Program Philosophy*

Children learn best when the material they're working with is fun and relevant to their lives. That's why The Letter People™ program teaches the basics of reading in a meaningful environment which stimulates your child's thinking and learning — based on a sequentially structured, multi-sensory word analysis approach, taught in the context of fun and age appropriate lessons, adventures and activities — incorporating tested and educationally sound principles for teaching reading, comprehension and writing skills. The Letter People™ program is unique, effective and fun for your child. Here's why:

Teaching Method

- *There are two schools of thought on teaching reading:* One is the "phonetic" approach — learning to decode (sound out) unknown words by using sound-symbol associations. In conjunction with phonics, sight words (phonetically irregular words) are presented and learned by their total shape or form.

  The other is the "whole language" approach, where reading skills are taught through songs, stories and exercises that are meaningful to a child. After all, words have both sound and meaning.

  We believe that both techniques are important — The Letter People™ is one of the first programs to combine the two.

Self-Paced

- Everyone learns at a different pace. The Letter People™ program allows you and your child to set the pace. View or review tapes and stories as often as needed.

Multi-Sensory

- Research shows that comprehension and memory are aided when several senses are used simultaneously. The Letter People™ program involves the visual, auditory, and kinesthetic senses — children see, hear and repeat letters and words on the videotapes. The Activity/Fun Pages provide the kinesthetic feedback when fine motor skills are employed to write the alphabet and words.

Whole Language

- Letters, their sounds and decoding skills are all taught within The Letter People™ stories. These life lessons are age appropriate and invite your child along to explore fun-filled adventures — *Mr. B. (Beautiful Buttons)* goes to a birthday party, *Mr. T (Tall Teeth)* learns not to be afraid of the dentist and *Mr. X (All Wrong)* learns how to make friends.

Spelling & Word Analysis

- The Letter People™ gives instruction and practice in decoding (reading) and encoding (spelling). Lucky and The Letter People™ teach how to listen to a word and break it down into its phonetic components. Very young children have the opportunity to "spell" out loud while children who can form their letters also write in the Activity/Fun Pages.

Comprehension

- The Letter People™ program develops comprehension skills, both literal (i.e. recalling details, stating the main idea and sequencing events) and inferential (i.e. drawing conclusions, predicting outcomes). The stories in the program give your child the opportunity to develop and practice these meaningful skills.

Interactivity

- The Letter People™ is *interactive*. Your child sees, hears and reads along with Lucky the Clown responding to his questions. Lucky also directs your child to the Activity/Fun Pages.